

News

Macomb County Board of Commissioners



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Wireless Internet Enhances Services in County Court Building

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. – Beginning this week, free wireless Internet service in the Macomb County Courthouse enables visitors to perform a variety of tasks, including: looking up case status, confirming which judge is hearing a case, using the Sheriff's online inmate locator, and more. Any court visitor with a laptop or Internet-enabled phone or device may use the service, and the access code and wireless Internet policy are available throughout the building.

In the future, people will also be able to use the service to pay for court costs or clerk services from anywhere in the building. The wireless Internet access is encrypted and completely separate from the county's computer network, ensuring data security.

"Wireless Internet gives customers in the building direct access to information on a self-serve basis, helping us meet demand with shrinking resources," said Macomb County Clerk/Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh. "With AT&T, we successfully provided wireless Internet in the jury room for years — this expands that popular service."

The county contracted with AT&T to provide equipment and installation at a one-time cost of \$15,458 and an on-going cost of less than \$2 per day. With coverage throughout most of the building and service open to the public and staff, the Macomb County Courthouse project may be the most open, and cover the most area, of any Michigan court wireless Internet project to date.

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"Wireless Internet service has made jury duty enjoyable and productive," said Macomb County Circuit Court Judge Mary A. Chrzanowski. "I am happy the county clerk partnered with the judges to provide yet another innovative service by allowing jurors access to the outside world while awaiting jury selection."

Macomb County Circuit Court Judge Richard L. Caretti said the service "improves access to justice."

"Our increasing case load requires us to come up with innovative ways to provide services to citizens," he added.

In addition, visitors may also view the Treasurer's delinquent tax property registry, or even check the availability of a business name while waiting in line to register a business.

"I think it's a good idea, especially if you don't get picked right away," said Brant Perry, who was serving jury duty on Tuesday.

Paul Gielegem, Chairman of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, applauded the effort by the Clerk's office.

"This project is a good example of how technology is being used in an efficient fashion at a time when county resources remain at a premium," he said.

This is not Sabaugh's first technology improvement for the Macomb County Court:

- Sabaugh first provided wireless Internet for jurors in 2006.
- A one-day/one-trial system shortened jury duty for most jurors and saved money.
- County jurors get pagers so they may shop or get fresh air while waiting.
- Jurors who need transportation are provided free bus tickets thanks to a partnership with the Suburban Mobile Authority for Regional Transport (SMART).
- County jurors can have library books waiting at the jury counter thanks to a partnership with the Mount Clemens Public Library and an online ordering system.

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